



How to Establish a Mentorship Program in your National Women's Law Students' Organization (NWLSO)

Many of Ms. JD's NWLSO chapters have found great success with mentorship programs, where newer students (typically 1Ls) are matched with upper-division students. This program not only provides new students with a critical resource in learning the tricks of the trade of law school, but it also further builds a sense of community among the members of the NWLSO community.

Below is a step-by-step guide to launching a mentoring program at your law school. We recommend that chapters designate one member to lead and coordinate the mentoring program from start to finish (i.e. making the pairings, to organizing Mentoring events, and following up with Mentors and Mentees throughout the year.) If you have any questions or need assistance in launching your program, don't hesitate to reach out to Ms. JD at nwls@ms-jd.org! We helped University of Texas' Women's Law Association create their mentorship program and would be happy to help you create yours.

Step One: Invite rising 2 & 3Ls to become NWLSO Mentors. In late July or early August, well before school starts, send an email to the rising 2Ls & 3Ls in the student body inviting them to become Mentors for incoming 1Ls. Your school can likely provide you with contact information for your fellow students, or assist with advertising this opportunity. Be sure to set a deadline for sign-ups that will give you plenty of time to make the pairings prior to 1L orientation or the first day of classes.

A sample email template with a link to a sample Google sign-up form is below:

Subject Line: Become a Mentor through the Women's Law Association 1L Mentoring Program!

Do you remember how you felt before coming to [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL]?

Did you feel nervous? Anxious? Excited? All three? Help alleviate some of that stress and make an incoming 1Ls experience a little more manageable by becoming her Mentor!

We are looking for a diverse group of women to serve as Mentors.

Why would I want to be a Mentor?

To help make another woman's transition to [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL] a little easier.

To meet someone new and possibly become her first friend at [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL].

To have fun with other women at [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL]!

What will I have to do as a Mentor?

Contact your Mentee, either by email or phone, to answer her questions and tell her about your experiences or share your thoughts about [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL].

Attend a fall Mentor/Mentee Kick Off party to meet your Mentee in person.

Check in on your Mentee periodically over the course of the year to see how she is doing, offer additional advice, wish her luck on finals, etc.

COMPLETE THE SIGN-UP FORM AT: [INSERT A LINK TO A GOOGLE FORM HERE. A SAMPLE GOOGLE FORM CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#).]

Please sign up by [INSERT DEADLINE]!

Any questions? Please contact [INSERT BEST POINT OF CONTACT'S NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS].

To encourage participation, you may also want to share your own positive experiences being mentored. Also tap into the network of your NWLSO Chapter: Ask the rising 2Ls who served as 1L representatives to reach out to their sections and also follow up with rising 2Ls who participated as Mentees to ask them to pay it forward as a Mentor this school year. Sample emails for these are below.

Email to 1L Section Reps

Hello previous NWLSO 1L Section Reps,

I hope you are having a great summer. I am writing to ask you if you would please reach out to the ladies in your 1L Sections about becoming Mentors for NWLSO's 1L Mentoring Program (and sign up to become a Mentor yourself, of course!). Below is the email that I sent out to my section, which you can feel free to copy. We want to recruit a great group of 2L and 3L women for the program, so please also forward this on to anyone you think might be interested in participating!

Thanks so much,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]

Dear [SECTION],

I hope you are all having a wonderful summer. I just wanted to write to encourage you all to sign up to become a Mentor through NWLSO's 1L Mentoring Program. Some of you may have participated as Mentees last year, so you know how awesome the program is. Information and sign-up info is below, and if you have any questions, just send me an email!

Thanks,

[NAME]

[INSERT ORIGINAL EMAIL TO STUDENT BODY WITH SIGN UP INFORMATION]

Email to Former Mentees

Hello,

Last year, you participated in the WLA's 1L Mentoring Program as a Mentee. We hope that you enjoyed being matched with a 2L or 3L Mentor and that she helped make your first year at [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL] less stressful. Now, it's your turn to help an incoming 1L feel welcome by becoming a Mentor yourself! Information and sign-up info is below, and if you have any questions, just send me an email!

Best,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]

[INSERT ORIGINAL EMAIL TO STUDENT BODY WITH SIGN UP INFORMATION]

Be sure to follow up a day or two before the deadline with a reminder to sign up; with all the email students get, reminders are never a bad thing!

Step Two: Invite incoming 1Ls to become Mentees. In late July or early August, well before orientation, send an email to the incoming 1Ls inviting them to become Mentees. A sample email template is below.

Subject Line: Be Paired with a Mentor Through NWLSO's 1L Mentoring Program!

Not sure what to expect coming to [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL]?

Nervous? Excited? Both?!

The transition to law school can be made a little easier by becoming a Mentee to a 2L or 3L Mentor! In the Mentoring Program, you will be paired with an amazing 2L or 3L woman who can help answer your questions about law school and share her experiences at [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL]. Plus, by being involved in the Mentoring Program, you will have the opportunity to meet other [INSERT NAME OF YOUR LAW SCHOOL] women.

- Your Mentor will contact you by phone or email to introduce herself and see if you have any questions before coming to HLS.

- You will be invited to a fall kick off party to meet your Mentor in person.

- You have the option to meet with your Mentor periodically throughout the year for coffee, lunch, drinks, or other outings.

Complete the sign up for at: [INSERT A LINK TO A GOOGLE FORM HERE. [A SAMPLE GOOGLE FORM CAN BE FOUND HERE.](#)]

Please sign up by [INSERT DEADLINE HERE]!

Any questions? Please contact [INSERT BEST POINT OF CONTACT'S NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS].

Step Three: Make the pairings. Once you have your mentors and mentees, match up pairs based on common academic interests, extracurricular interests, hometowns, favorite TV shows, undergraduate institutions, etc. Even one small thing in common can help to break the ice!

Depending on the number of sign-ups you may need to pair up one Mentor with more than one Mentee. If this is the case, send an email to all of the Mentors who have signed up and ask for volunteers to be paired with two Mentees.

If you end up with more Mentors than Mentees after the deadline, don't despair! Let the surplus of Mentors know that as additional 1Ls sign-up or reach out for assistance you will make additional pairings.

Step Four: Introduce the pairs. Aim to have all of the pairings made and introduced prior to orientation, or the first day of classes. A sample introduction email is below.

Subject Line: NWLSO Mentorship Program Pairing

Hi [INSERT MENTOR & MENTEE'S NAMES],

Thank you for signing up to participate in NWLSO's matching program! We are happy to introduce you as Mentor and Mentee for the upcoming school year. You may find one another's contact information below:

Mentor: [INSERT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS]

Mentee: [INSERT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS]

Mentor, in the next few days, please shoot your Mentee an email and offer to answer any questions and/or set up a time for coffee, lunch, etc., in the first few weeks of the semester.

Mentee, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to your Mentor!

If you have any questions about the mentorship program, please feel free to contact us at [INSERT YOUR NWLSO MENTOR PROGRAM POINT OF CONTACT]. Enjoy getting to know each other, and we'll be in touch soon about the Kick Off Party!

Sincerely,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]

Step Five: Host a Kick Off Party. Host a fun event during the first few weeks of school to bring the Mentors and Mentees together for an afternoon or evening of fun! Some event ideas include an evening of cupcake decorating and wine, or a night of pizza, beer, and trivia. No matter the activity, keep it simple and give the Mentors and Mentees a time to meet and bond with one another.

When you send the invitation out to Mentors and Mentees encourage them to reach out to one another if they are or are not able to make it to the event. If a Mentor or Mentee is unable to attend encourage them to find another time to meet up with their counterpart.

Step Six: Encourage both Mentors and Mentees to reach out to each other throughout the year. Once a month send an email to the Mentors and an email to Mentees to encourage them to connect with one another. Remind the Mentors about the upcoming hurdles their Mentees might be facing (first brief deadlines, tracking down outlines, studying for finals, journal write-on etc.). These obstacles provide great opportunities to reach out!

Also, check in with the Mentees about these same issues and remind them that their Mentor is there as a resource. Be sure to remind both Mentors and Mentees of your upcoming events and encourage them to attend together! Sample emails to Mentors are below, and these can easily be altered to follow up with the Mentees as well.

Subject Line: Reminder for WLA Mentors: 1L Orientation Tomorrow!

Hi Mentors!

First of all, thank you for volunteering to be a Mentor for this coming year! It should be an amazing year and we are looking forward to hearing about your adventures with your Mentee. As a quick reminder, Orientation starts **tomorrow** so if you have not already done so, *please contact* your Mentee as soon as possible!

Thank you again for participating and we are looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]

PS -- if you did not receive an email with a match, please let us know and we will send it to you again!

Subject Line: Reminder: Contact your 1L Mentees!

Dear Mentors,

Thank you again for signing up to be a NWLSO Mentor! You should have received an email letting you know who your 1L Mentee is last week. 1L classes start next week, so if

you haven't already, please remember to send your Little Sister an email of encouragement by the end of this week.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us. Once again, enjoy being a Mentor, and mark your calendar for our Kick Off Party on [INSERT TIME DATE AND LOCATION]. We'll be in touch with more information soon!

Sincerely,

[INSERT YOUR NAME]